COUNTY OF MENARD)
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STATE OF ILLINOIS)

The Menard County Board of Commissioners met on Thursday, October 29, 2026, at 9:00 AM at the Menard County Courthouse Annex, 101 East Jefferson, Petersburg, Illinois. Commissioners Ed Whitcomb, Troy Cummings, Rich Brauer, and Rod Riech were physically present. A quorum was present. County Clerk Marty Gum, State's Attorney Gwen Thomas, County Treasurer Molly Bettis, and County Coordinator Dara Worthington were physically present.

Chairperson Whitcomb called the meeting to order. Commissioner Brauer made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda which consisted of the Regular meeting minutes from the October 13, 2026, meeting, the special budget meeting from October 20, 2026, and the September 2026 Department Expense Reports. Commissioner Riech seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Scheduled/Unscheduled Guests

Menard County Animal Control - Terrance O'Brien, DVM

Dr. O'Brien, Administrator of Menard County Animal Control, was present to present the proposed FY27 Animal Control budget. There was discussion regarding the challenges to the budget and the means to address the challenges. Also discussed was the drafting of a new Animal Control ordinance and Intergovernmental Agreements with the different communities.

Heritage Operations Group – Steven Hart & Catherine McDowell

Steven Hart, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer and Catherine McDowell, Vice President of Operations, both from Heritage Operations Group were in attendance to present the FY27 budgets for Sunny Acres Nursing Home and Countryside Estates as well as the status of the 2027 Aetna Managed Care Plan for Sunny Acres. 2027 rates for both the nursing home and independent living facility were proposed for the new year.

Scheduled County Elected Officials & Staff

County Circuit Clerk's Report/Request for Board Action

Circuit Clerk Elyse Waibel was in attendance to propose her FY27 budgets for funds 005, 000, 055, and 059.

County Zoning Administrator's Report/Request for Board Action

Zoning Administrator Joe Crowe was present and provided an update on his departmental activities.

Ordinance 34-26 – Menard County Supplemental Wind Energy Siting Ordinance
Commissioner Riech made a motion to approve the ordinance and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion. The motion carried with three 'ayes' and Commissioner Brauer voting 'present'. This shall be known as **Ordinance 34-26**.

Ordinance 35-26 – Menard County Solar Energy Siting Ordinance
Commissioner Cummings made a motion to approve the ordinance. Commissioner Riech seconded the motion. The motion carried with three 'ayes" and Commissioner Brauer voting 'present'. This shall be known as **Ordinance 35-26**.

Ordinance 36-26 – Menard County Battery Energy Storage System Siting
Commissioner Cummings made a motion to approve the ordinance and Commissioner Riech seconded the motion. The motion carried with three 'ayes" and Commissioner Brauer voting 'present'. This shall be known as **Ordinance 36-26**.

County Supervisor of Assessment's Report/Request for Board Action

Supervisor of Assessments Dawn Kelton reported that she had successfully completed the necessary training for her elected office.

County Engineer's Report/Request for Board Action

County Engineer Corey Dowd was in attendance. Dowd presented the following resolution for consideration of approval:

Resolution 37-26 – Appropriating Motor Fuel Tax Funds for Payment of County Engineer's Salary

Commissioner Brauer made a motion to approve the resolution presented and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Dowd provided the commissioners with an overview of his department's activities.

County EMS/EMA Chief's Report/Request for Board Action

Chief Kolbe Huss was present and updated the board on the new signage and work on the office building.

County Sheriff's Report/Request for Board Action

Sheriff Mark Oller and Administrative Assistance Ann Gorman were present. Sheriff Oller reported that the current census at the jail was one female and nine males with two of the holds being from Cass County. Oller and Gorman presented a budget for FY27 fund 018. There was a brief inquiry regarding bonding for projects.

County Treasurer's Report/Request for Board Action

Treasurer Molly Bettis was in attendance.

Bettis provided budgets proposed for FY27 as follows: 008, 038, 090, 006, 027, 030, 043, 052, 053, and 057. Bettis that she would have the final version of the draft budget to the commissions on Wednesday, November 4. Discussion ensued regarding having an additional budget meeting with that date being set for Thursday, November 5, 2026, at 2:30 PM at the annex.

County Clerk's Report/Request for Board Action

County Clerk Marty Gum was present and provided an overview of current voting statistics.

County Coroner's Report/Request for Board Action

Coroner Ben Hollis was present with his FY27 budget for funds 014 and 000.

Mr. Hollis also presented the proposed budget for FY27 for the Menard County Fair for fund 043.

State's Attorney's Report/Request for Board Action

State's Attorney Gwen Thomas was in attendance. Thomas presented her proposed FY27 budgets for funds 003 and 000.

Thomas also provided a brief update on the current contract negotiations with Heritage Operations Group.

County Coordinator's Report/Requests for Board Action

Coordinator Dara Worthington was in attendance. Worthington presented the April 14, 2026 Executive Session minutes to the board with the recommendation they remain closed. Commissioner Cummings made a motion in that order and Commissioner Brauer seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Additionally, Worthington presented information on NACO dues for 2027, drafting a description of the role of Sunny Acres Advisory Board members, the recent bid opening for Sunny Acres, closing of the Salvation Army bank account, and the proposed Christmas party to be on December 4, 2026.

Individual Board of Commissioners' Reports/Requests for Board Action

Commissioner Cummings provided an update on the recent Sunny Acres Advisory Board meeting.

Other Scheduled Topics

Approval of 2027 Regular Meetings of the Menard County Board of Commissioners
Commissioner Brauer made a motion to approve the meeting schedule as presented and Commissioner Riech seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 38-26 – Appointment of 2027 Menard County Grant Jurors and Petit Jurors

Commissioner Cummings made a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Brauer seconded. The motion carried unanimously. This shall be known as **Resolution 38-26.**

Resolution 39-26 – Resolution for County to Acquire All Tax Certificates

Commissioner Cummings made a motion to approve the resolution and Commissioner Riech seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Drafting of the FY27 tax levies was discussed at length with an overview of the process provided by Engineer Dowd. Various scenarios were discussed on how to handle the overall shortfall.

Adjournment

Having no further business coming before them, Commissioner Brauer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 AM. Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.